

V. REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph. The claims are canceled and, as a result, the rejection as applied thereto is now moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Muir et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0192090). The claims are canceled and, as a result, the rejection as applied thereto is now moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Muir in view of Lee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,847,416). The claims are canceled and, as a result, the rejection as applied thereto is now moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Newly-added claims 8-18 include features not shown in the applied art. The features of the present invention are summarized as follows:

The present invention relates to a gaming machine comprising:

a reel on which symbols are drawn;

a front liquid crystal panel disposed in front of the reel, for transparently displaying the symbols drawn on the reel; and

a liquid crystal shutter disposed between the reel and the front liquid crystal panel, for shielding display in a transparent manner of the symbols on the front liquid crystal liquid panel.

First Embodiment:

In a case where a symbol making up a special prize is not displayed, in order to cause the entire front liquid crystal panel to display an effect image for notifying a

player that a prize has not been established, the liquid crystal shutter shields display of the symbols transparently displayed on the transparent display region of the front liquid crystal panel (see New Claim 8, Paragraphs [0099], [0100], [0124], and [0125] of the Specification).

Second Embodiment:

In order to indicate that a special prize has been established, by means of a shielding degree, i.e., a degree of shielding of the display of the symbols transparently displayed on the front liquid crystal panel, the shielding degree is determined in accordance with determination of a special prize, and the liquid crystal shutter is controlled in accordance with the determined shielding degree (see New Claim 11, Paragraph [0157] of the Specification).

Third Embodiment:

The plurality of liquid crystal shutters are controlled so as to sequentially shield display of the symbols in sync with timing at which the plurality of reels are stopped in chronological order in a predetermined order.

Further, the present invention employs the front liquid crystal shutter structure limited as follows:

Fourth Embodiment:

The aforementioned front liquid crystal shutter is made up of the normally white liquid crystal panel for maintaining the transparent state with a voltage being not applied (see New Claim 18, Paragraph [0125] of the Specification).

Generally, there are two types of a liquid crystal panel: one is a normally black panel which becomes transparent in a state in which a voltage is applied. The other is a normally white panel which becomes transparent in a state in which a voltage is not applied.

The present invention employs the latter, the normally white liquid crystal panels the liquid crystal shutter. Muir (US2005/1192090A) discloses *"the varying of the energy levels applied to the zones 78 of the shutter mechanism 76 allows varying degrees of transparency of those zones 78 to be achieved"* (Paragraph [0063] of the Specification). From this disclosure, it is assumed that degrees of transparency are varied by always applying the energy to the shutter mechanism 76 of Muir. Further, Muir fails to disclose/suggest that the panel is transparent in off-state in which a voltage is not applied and is made opaque from transparent upon application of a voltage, likewise the present invention.

Support for the newly-added claims is as follows:

New Claims 8 and 9 are described in Paragraphs [0099], [0100], [0124], and [0125] of the Specification.

New Claims 11 to 13 are described in Paragraph [0157] of the Specification.

New Claims 15 and 16 are described in Paragraphs [0150] to [0156], [0170], and [0175] of the Specification.

New Claims 10, 14, 17 and 18 are described in Paragraph [0125] of the Specification.

It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this Amendment is believed to be a complete response to the outstanding Office Action. Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to set forth further arguments and remarks supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of

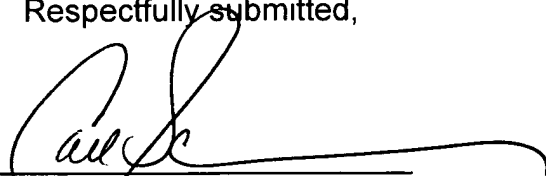
the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal
 Petition for Extension of Time (one month)

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